

In the claims:

1. (currently amended) A central network device for use in a power integrated local area network, the central network device comprising:

an electrochemical power source in the central networking device; and

a network interface configured to communicate with a plurality of member network devices via a combined power/data link and to deliver power from energy stored by the electrochemical power source to at least one selected member network device via the combined power/data link, the at least one selected member network device being capable of accepting power over the power integrated local area network;

wherein the electrochemical power source is configured to provide back up power to the at least one selected member network device in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device.

2. (original) A central network device according to claim 1 wherein the power integrated local area network is configured to execute the Ethernet protocol.

3. (original) A central network device according to claim 1, further comprising networking logic chosen from the group consisting of a switch, a hub, a router, and a multiplexer.

4. (original) A central network device according to claim 1, wherein the power integrated local area network is configured to operate according to a Power Ethernet Standard.

5. (original) A central network device according to claim 4, the central network device being configured to deliver power and data through an MDI-X compliant port.

6. (original) A central network device according to claim 1, further comprising a housing shared by the electrochemical power source and the network interface.

7. (original) A central network device according to claim 1, further comprising power rectification circuitry.

8. (original) A central network device according to claim 7, further comprising an AC to DC converter.

9. (original) A central network device according to claim 7, further comprising a DC to DC converter.

10. (original) A central network device according to claim 1, wherein the electrochemical power source comprises a rechargeable battery.

11. (original) A central network device according to claim 10, wherein the rechargeable battery is configured to be charged by an AC to DC converter.

12. (original) A central network device according to claim 10, wherein the rechargeable battery is configured to provide power to a DC to DC converter, the DC to DC converter being configured to power the at least one selected member network device.

13. (original) A central network device according to claim 1, wherein the electrochemical power source is configured to provide backup power to the at least one selected member network device in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device.

14. (original) A central network device according to claim 1, wherein the plurality of member network devices comprises a network appliance.

15. (currently amended) A central network device according to claim 14, wherein the network appliance comprises:

- a peripheral device configured to transmit data to the power integrated local area network;

- a communication engine operably coupled with the peripheral device, the communication engine configured to control data transmission via the power integrated local area network; and

an appliance network interface operably coupled with the communication engine, the appliance network interface being configured to transmit data to and to receive data from the power integrated local area network via the combined power/data link, data transfer between the peripheral device and the power integrated local area network being forwarded via the appliance network interface.

16. (currently amended) A power integrated local area network, the network comprising:

a plurality of member network devices; and

a central network device configured to communicate with the plurality of member network devices via a plurality of combined power/data links, and to deliver power, from energy stored in an electrochemical power source in the central network device, to at least one selected member network device that is capable of accepting power from the central network device via a combined power/data link coupled to the at least one selected member network device;

wherein the electrochemical power source is configured to provide back up power to the at least one selected member network device in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device.

17. (currently amended) A central network device for use in a power integrated local area network, the central network device comprising:

networking logic, configured to communicate with a plurality of member network devices via a corresponding plurality of combined power/data links; and

electrochemical power source means for providing power to at least one selected member network device via a combined power/data link associated with the at least one selected member, the selected member network device being capable of accepting power over the combined power/data link in the power integrated local area network;

wherein the electrochemical power source is configured to provide back up power to the at least one selected member network device in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device.

18. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, wherein the power integrated local area network is configured to execute the Ethernet protocol.

19. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, wherein the networking logic is chosen from the group consisting of a switch, a hub, a router, and a multiplexer.

20. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, wherein the power integrated local area network is configured to operate according to a Power Ethernet Standard.

21. (original) A central network device according to claim 20, the central network device being configured to deliver power and data through an MDI-X compliant port.

22. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, further comprising a housing shared by the electrochemical power source means and the networking logic.

23. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, further comprising power rectification circuitry.

24. (original) A central network device according to claim 13, further comprising an AC to DC converter.

25. (original) A central network device according to claim 23, further comprising a DC to DC converter.

26. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, wherein the electrochemical power source means comprises a rechargeable battery.

27. (original) A central network device according to claim 26, wherein the rechargeable battery is configured to be charged by an AC to DC converter.

28. (original) A central network device according to claim 26, wherein the rechargeable battery is configured to provide power to a DC to DC converter, the DC to DC converter being configured to power the at least one selected member network device.

29. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, wherein the electrochemical power source means is configured to provide backup power to the at least one selected member network device in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device.

30. (original) A central network device according to claim 17, wherein the plurality of member network devices comprises a network appliance.

31. (original) A central network device according to claim 30, wherein the network appliance comprises:

- a peripheral device configured to transmit data to the power integrated local area network;
- a communication engine operably coupled with the peripheral device, the communication engine configured to control data transmission via the power integrated local area network; and
- an appliance network interface operably coupled with the communication engine, the appliance network interface being configured to transmit data to and to receive data from the power integrated local area network, data transfer between the peripheral device and the power integrated local area network being forwarded via the appliance network interface.

32. (currently amended) A method for powering a local area network using power from a central network device, the method comprising:

- selecting at least one member network device capable of accepting power over the local area network on a combined power/data link in the local area network; and
- providing backup power, from energy stored by an electrochemical power source in the central network device, to the at least one selected member network device via the combined power/data link in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device.

33. (original) A method according to claim 32, wherein the method comprises:
executing the Ethernet protocol on the local area network.
34. (original) A method according to claim 32, wherein the method comprises:
housing the electrochemical power source in a common enclosure with networking logic
chosen from the group consisting of a switch, a hub, a router, and a multiplexer.
35. (original) A method according to claim 32, wherein the method comprises:
operating the local area network according to a Power Ethernet Standard.
36. (original) A method according to claim 35, wherein the method comprises:
delivering power and data through an MDI-X compliant port.
37. (original) A method according to claim 32, wherein the method comprises:
housing rectification circuitry in a common enclosure with the electrochemical power
source.
38. (original) A method according to claim 37, wherein the method comprises:
housing an AC to DC converter in the common enclosure.
39. (original) A method according to claim 37, wherein the method comprises:
housing a DC to DC converter in the common enclosure.
40. (original) A method according to claim 32, wherein the method comprises:
housing a rechargeable battery in a common enclosure with networking logic.
41. (original) A method according to claim 40, wherein the method comprises:
charging the rechargeable battery with an AC to DC converter.
42. (original) A method according to claim 40, wherein the method comprises:

delivering power from the rechargeable battery to a DC to DC converter; and
delivering power from the DC to DC converter to the at least one selected member network devices.

43. (original) A method according to claim 32, wherein the method comprises:

delivering backup power from the electrochemical power source to the at least one selected member network device, in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device.

44. (original) A method according to claim 32, wherein the method comprises:

delivering power from the electrochemical power source to a network appliance.

45. (original) A method according to claim 44, wherein the method comprises delivering power to a network appliance that comprises:

a peripheral device configured to transmit data to the local area network;
a communication engine operably coupled with the peripheral device, the communication engine configured to control data transmission via the local area network; and
an appliance network interface operably coupled with the communication engine, the appliance network interface being configured to transmit data to and to receive data from the local area network, data transfer between the peripheral device and the local area network being forwarded via the appliance network interface.

46. (currently amended) A central network device for use in a power integrated local area network, the central network device comprising:

a housing;
networking logic, enclosed by the housing, configured to communicate with a plurality of member network devices via a plurality of combined power/data links;
an electrochemical power source, sharing the housing with the networking logic, for storing energy to provide power for the member network devices via the plurality of combined

power/data links in the event of an interruption of delivery of primary power to the central network device; and rectification circuitry, sharing the housing with the networking logic and the electrochemical power source, wherein the power integrated local area network is configured to execute the Ethernet protocol.

47. (currently amended) A method for powering a local area network using power from a central network device, the method comprising:

housing an electrochemical power source in a common enclosure with networking logic configured to communicate with a plurality of member network devices via a plurality of combined power/data links;

rectifying primary power that is delivered to the central network device, to charge the electrochemical power source;

delivering power stored by the electrochemical power source to at least one member device of the plurality of member network devices via at least one of the combined power/data links of the plurality of power/data links; and

executing the Ethernet protocol on the local area network.